

A Thing of Brass

(2 Kings 18:4)

- Introduction:
1. Christianity requires discernment (Hebrews 5:14).
 - a. Discernment between good and evil.
 - b. Discernment between good and better.
 - c. Discernment between what is of value and what is of greater value.
 2. Some things are more important than others (Matthew 23:23; John 19:11).
 3. Jesus is on record telling us which commandment is the greatest of all (Mt. 22:37).
 4. Though Jesus is clear on this point, many people in the past and present have failed to discern this truth.
 5. Let's examine two Old Testament examples when people failed to discern and make some present day applications.

I. The Brazen Serpent

- A. (Numbers 21:4-9; 2 Kings 18:4).
- B. This **"thing of brass"** had become an idol to the Israelites.
- C. What was nothing more than a vehicle to bring people to God became the people's god itself.

II. The Ark Of The Covenant

- A. (Exodus 25:10-22) Its description.
- B. (Deuteronomy 10:4-5) Its contents.
- C. Its significance.
 1. It was the place to know God's will (Exodus 25:22).
 2. It was the place of entreaty (Joshua 7:6-15).
 3. It was the place of atonement (Leviticus 16:2, 14-17).
- D. The ark however, became a **"good luck charm"**; their savior rather than God.
- E. (2 Samuel 4:1-22).

III. Present Day Failures In Discernment

- A. The Bible.
- B. Church Attendance.
- C. The Lord's Supper.
- D. Baptism.

- Conclusion:
1. Like the brazen serpent and the ark of the covenant, these modern day items just mentioned are not our savior.
 2. They are means to an end and not an end in and of themselves.
 3. It won't matter if you study your Bible, how often you attend church, or whether you were baptized if you don't have a relationship with Christ.
 4. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind" (Matthew 22:37).